

Awake!

DECEMBER 2012



Whatever Happened
to Patience?

Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 41,042,000

PUBLISHED IN 84 LANGUAGES

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Whatever Happened to Patience?

IMPATIENCE has been around for a long time. There is nothing new about people losing their patience while stuck in traffic or waiting in line. But some experts believe that people are less patient today than in the past—and for reasons that might surprise you.

Some analysts suggest that in recent years many people are less patient because of technology. According to *The Gazette* of Montreal, Canada, some researchers suggest that “digital technology, from

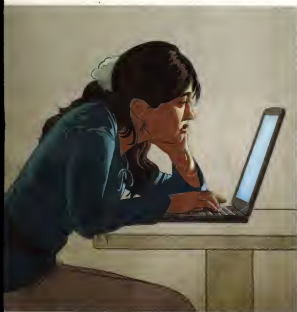
cellphones to cameras to email to iPods, is changing our lives . . . The instant results we get from this technology have in turn increased our appetite for instant gratification in other aspects of our lives.”

Family psychologist Dr. Jennifer Hartstein makes some sobering observations. She explains that “we have become an immediate gratification culture, and we expect things to move quickly, efficiently and in the way we want. When that doesn’t happen, we tend to become increasingly

frustrated and irritable, [a sign] of impatience." She adds, "We've lost the art of just slowing down and enjoying the moment."

Some believe that e-mail is losing popularity and could soon become obsolete. Why? Because many people who send messages do not have the patience to wait hours, or even minutes, for a response. Also, with e-mails, as with letter writing, introductory and concluding greetings are often expected. But many people consider such formalities to be boring and time-consuming. They prefer instant messaging, which does not require the protocols of e-mail. It seems that people just do

Many people do not have the patience to read lengthy text on a printed page



not have the patience to type polite greetings! Many people do not take the time to proof-read what they put in writing. As a result, letters and e-mails go out to the wrong recipients or contain numerous grammatical and typographical errors.

The thirst for immediate results is not limited to the realm of digital communication. People seem to be losing their ability to wait in other areas of life. For instance, do you ever find yourself talking too fast, eating too fast, driving too fast, or spending money too fast? The few moments it takes to wait for an elevator to come, for a traffic light to change, or for a computer to boot up may seem like an eternity.

Experts have observed that many people do not have the patience to read through lengthy text in print. Why? Because they are accustomed to navigating speedily through Web pages, jumping from blurb to blurb and from bullet to bullet, hoping to land on the main point as quickly as possible.

Whatever happened to patience? Experts do not have all the answers when it comes to the causes of impatience. Yet, there seems to be compelling evidence that impatience can be harmful. The following articles discuss some of the risks of impatience and what you can do to be more patient.

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This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; L. Weaver, Jr., President; G. F. Simons, Secretary-Treasurer, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483, and by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4, Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. © 2012 Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in Canada.

Impatience Can Be Harmful

IMAGINE this scenario: A man is driving on a two-lane road in a no-passing zone. The woman in the car in front of him is driving slightly under the maximum speed limit. To the impatient man, she seems to be driving far too slowly. After dangerously tailgating her vehicle for a few minutes, he loses all patience and passes her at a high rate of speed. In the process, he breaks the law and risks causing an accident.

What about the woman who does not have the patience to work with people who are

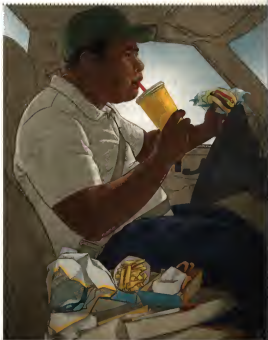
not as fast or as smart as she is? Or the man who when waiting for an elevator keeps impatiently pushing the call button? Do you often become impatient with your elderly parents? Or are you a parent who quickly runs out of patience with your young children? Are you easily annoyed by the mistakes of others?

Everyone is likely to become impatient on occasion. But there may be serious consequences when bouts of impatience are an everyday occurrence.

Health risks:

For one thing, impatience is linked to frustration, irritation, and even anger. Such emotions can raise our stress level, which in turn can harm our health. A recent study published by the American Medical Association specifically pointed to impatience as a risk factor for hypertension, even among young adults.

There are other health problems associated with the lack of patience. A recent study revealed that impatience is linked to obesity. "The researchers found that impatient individuals are more likely to be obese than people who are good at waiting," reports *The Washington Post*. In some areas, inexpensive fast food is easily available at all times of the day, and many impatient people cannot resist the temptation.



LANGUAGES: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional)* (audio Mandarin only), Chitonga, Cimbria, Croatian, Czech,* Danish,* Dutch,* English,* Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish,* French,* Georgian, German,* Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian,* Japanese,* Kannada, Kinyarwanda, Kirghiz, Kirundi, Korean,* Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Malayalam, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian,* Polish,* Portuguese,* Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian,* Samoan, Sango, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Sicilian, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish,* Swahili, Swedish,* Tagalog,* Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

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Procrastination:

A study by the London-based Centre for Economic Policy Research found that impatient people are likely to be chronic procrastinators. Could it be that they feel compelled to postpone time-consuming tasks because they do not have the patience needed to bring the tasks to completion? At any rate, the tendency to postpone can have serious consequences for the procrastinator as well as for the economy. According to *The Telegraph*, a newspaper in Britain, researcher Ernesto Reuben stated that "procrastination seriously affects our productivity at work and can cost people considerable amounts of money as [impatient people] postpone paperwork indefinitely."

Alcohol abuse and violence:

According to the British newspaper *South Wales Echo*, "people who are impatient are more likely to be involved in late-night drink-fueled violence." Researchers at Cardiff University established this link after studying hundreds of men and women. The study revealed, says the *Echo*, that "impatient people were more likely to drink alcohol heavily and were prone to violence."



Poor judgment:

A group of analysts working for the Pew Research Center in Washington, D.C., found that impatient people "often make quick, shallow choices." Dr. Ilango Ponnuswami, professor and head of the Department of Social Work at the Bharathidasan University in India, reached a similar conclusion. He explains: "Impatience will cost you. It can cost you money, friendships, pain and suffering or any number of consequences simply because impatience is often followed by bad decisions."

Financial woes:

Impatience has been linked to "higher debt levels," says *Research Review*, published by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, U.S.A. For instance, impatient newlyweds may want to have all the comforts of a home soon after the wedding, despite limited finances. So they buy the house, the furniture, the car, and everything else—on credit. This practice can harm the marriage. Researchers from the University of Arkansas, U.S.A., say that "newly married couples who bring debt into their marriage are less happy than couples who bring little or no debt into marriage."

Some blame impatience for the recent economic crash in the United States. The financial magazine *Forbes* claims that "the state of the present market is the consequence of undue impatience combined with excessive greed. Impatience led many thousands of ordinary people to seek to acquire properties of much higher value than their savings justified. They thus sought to borrow collectively immense sums that they could not hope to repay for many years—and, in some cases, ever."



Loss of friends:

Impatience can damage our ability to communicate. When a person does not have the patience to engage in meaningful conversation, he tends to speak without thinking. He may also get annoyed when others speak. Such a person does not have the patience to wait for others to get to the point of what they are saying. So the impatient listener may tend to rush others into finishing their sentences by putting words in their mouth or may try to find some other way to hurry the conversation.

Such impatience can result in the loss of friendships. Dr. Jennifer Hartstein, a mental-health professional quoted in the preceding article, explains: "Who wants to be with somebody who is tapping [his or her] toes all the time [or] looking at the watch all the time?" Yes, impatience is not a very attractive quality. It will drive your friends away.

These are just a few of the bad consequences that may result from impatience. The following article will discuss how you can cultivate and maintain patience.

How to Be More Patient

AFTER reading the preceding articles, you will probably agree that the more patient you are, the more likely you are to enjoy better health, make better decisions, and have good friends. So how can you learn to be more patient? Consider the following recommendations.

Identify the causes:

The things or situations that make you impatient have been called impatience triggers. What triggers your impatience? Are there specific individuals who try your patience? Perhaps your mate, parents, or children are the principal impatience triggers in your life. Or are your triggers usually time related? For instance, are you likely to lose your patience when you have to wait for others or when you are running late? Do you lose your patience when you are tired, hungry, sleepy, or under some type of stress? Do you more often lose your patience at home or at work?

How can merely identifying your impatience triggers help? Long ago, King Solomon wrote: "Sensible people foresee trouble and hide from it, but gullible people go ahead and suffer the consequence." (Proverbs 22:3, God's Word Bible) In harmony with this ancient Bible proverb, if you anticipate or "foresee" your bouts of impatience, you may be able to prevent them. At first you may have to make calculated efforts to be more patient, but in time patience can become a quality that comes naturally to you.

Simplify your life:

According to Professor Noreen Herzfeld, who teaches computer science at Saint John's University, in Minnesota, U.S.A., "people really can't multitask. The brain cannot concentrate on several things simultaneously." She adds: "Over time, multitasking erodes our ability to pay focused, close attention, and this eventually eats away at traits such as patience, tenacity, judgment, and problem solving."

It is difficult to cultivate patience when you are stressed from having too many things to do, too many places to be, and too many people to stay in touch with. Dr. Jennifer Hartstein, mentioned earlier in this series, warns: "Fundamentally, stress is the cause of much of our impatient reactions."

So, "slow down and smell the roses," as the old adage says. Make time to enjoy life. Make time to establish deep friendships with a few people, rather than pursuing shallow friendships with a huge network of people. Budget your time, and set your priorities wisely. Beware of time-wasting hobbies and gadgets.

In order to simplify your life, you may need to look at your daily routine. Where can you slow down or cut down? A Bible proverb says: "For everything there is an appointed time . . . ,



*It does little good to worry over things
you cannot control*

a time to keep and a time to throw away." (Ecclesiastes 3: 1, 6) Maybe this is the time for you to eliminate some time-consuming things so that you are not too busy to be patient.

Be realistic:

Have a realistic view of life. First of all, in real life, things do not always happen as fast as we wish. Accept the fact that time moves at the speed of time and not at the speed of your expectations. That is patience.

Second, remember that you cannot always control your circumstances. Wise King Solomon wrote: "The fastest runner does not always win the race; the strongest army does not always win the battle; the wisest man does not always get the food he earns; the smartest man does not always get the wealth; and an educated person does not always get the praise he deserves. When the time comes, bad things happen to everyone! A person never knows what will happen to him next."—Ecclesiastes 9:11, 12, *Holy Bible—Easy-to-Read Version*.

Instead of losing your patience over circumstances that are beyond your control, try to identify things that you can control. To illustrate, rather than getting angry over a delayed bus or train, try to find another way to get to your destination. Even walking might be better than giv-

ing in to impatience and anger. If waiting is the only option, use the time to do something productive, such as doing some meaningful reading or writing down your plans for future activities.

The reality of life is that it does little good to worry over things that you cannot control. The Bible aptly says: "None of you can add any time to your life by worrying about it."—Luke 12: 25, *Holy Bible—Easy-to-Read Version*.

Develop spirituality:

Many who believe in the Bible have found that by applying its principles, they can develop patience. According to the Bible, a spiritual person is more inclined to display patience, along with other important virtues such as love, joy, peace, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22, 23) The Bible promises: "Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers." (Philippians 4:6, 7) Study the Bible and learn how you can live less anxiously and more patiently.

Does God Use Natural Disasters to Punish Mankind Today?

SOME people believe that God uses natural calamities to discipline humankind. Others reject that notion. Still others do not know what to believe. One professor of religious studies stated: "Most religious traditions acknowledge that no one can speak authoritatively about divine will in natural disasters."

The Bible, however, provides satisfying answers. It sheds light on whether God sends natural disasters to punish mankind today. It also sheds light on what is behind the suffering that so many experience.

The Scriptures Provide a Pattern

The Bible reveals two fundamental truths about God, whose name is Jehovah. First, he is the Creator and as such has the power and authority to control earth's natural forces. (Revelation 4:11) Second, his actions are always in harmony with his personality, qualities, and principles. He states at Malachi 3:6: "I am Jehovah; I have not changed." With these points in mind, consider two events in the past, one involving a flood and another involving a drought. You will see that in Bible history when God used natural forces to execute his judgments, he always provided (1) a *warning*, (2) a *reason*, and (3) *protection for obedient worshippers*.

The Flood of Noah's Day

Warning. Decades before the Flood, Jehovah told Noah: "As for me, here I am bringing the deluge of waters upon the earth to bring to ruin all flesh." (Genesis 6:17) Noah,

"a preacher of righteousness," warned the people, but they "took no note."—2 Peter 2:5; Matthew 24:39.

Reason. Jehovah announced: "The end of all flesh has come before me, because the earth is full of violence as a result of them."—Genesis 6:13.

Protection for obedient worshippers. Jehovah gave Noah detailed instructions regarding the making of an ark for survival of the Flood. "Noah and those who were with him in the ark kept on surviving."—Genesis 7:23.

Drought in Israel

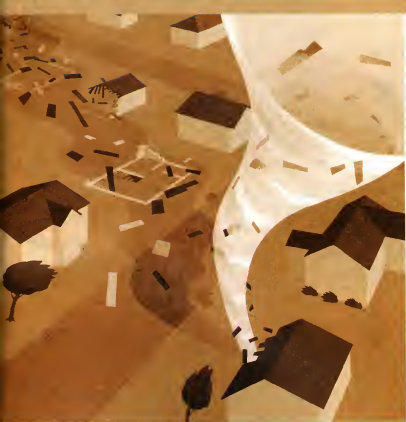
Warning. Before Jehovah God brought a severe drought on Israel, his prophet Elijah announced: "There will occur during these years neither dew nor rain, except at the order of [God's] word!"—1 Kings 17:1.

Reason. Israel's worship of the false god Baal prompted Jehovah's action. In explanation, Elijah stated: "You men have left the commandments of Jehovah, and you went following the Baals."—1 Kings 18:18.

Protection for obedient worshippers. Jehovah provided food for obedient worshippers during the drought.—1 Kings 17:6, 14; 18:4; 19:18.

What the Pattern Reveals

Today there is no evidence that natural disasters are part of a master plan to punish mankind. As a God of justice, Jehovah has never 'swept away the righteous with the wicked.' (Genesis 18:23, 25) He made provi-



**God is not responsible
for the misery inflicted
on people**

sion for those who were obedient to him. Today natural disasters afflict men, women, and children indiscriminately.

Clearly, current natural disasters do not fit the pattern of divine intervention found in the Scriptures. What is more, these random events are out of harmony with God's personality. James 1:13 states that God does not try people with evil things, and 1 John 4:8 sums up God's character in these words: "God is love." He could never be responsible for the misery inflicted on innocent people by random storms, earthquakes, and similar tragedies. Will such disasters ever end?

The Suffering Will End

Jehovah God never intended for humankind to be plagued by natural disasters. His will is for humans to live forever in peaceful conditions on earth. As he did in Noah's

day, he will intervene in earth's affairs to remove badness. True to form, Jehovah God is providing advance notice by having a message of warning declared worldwide, thus allowing people to put themselves in line for survival. —Psalm 37:9, 11, 29; Matthew 24:14.

HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- Does God use natural disasters to punish people?—**James 1:13.**
- How do we know that God will not destroy innocent people?—**1 John 4:8.**
- Will the suffering caused by disasters ever end?—**Revelation 21:4.**

The **COW** With **TWO WOOLLY** **COATS**

WITH its sweeping horns, a long fringe dangling over its eyes, and a thick, shaggy coat covering its stocky frame, the highland cow is instantly recognizable.

The hardy highlander—one of the oldest-known breeds of cattle—has thrived for centuries in the harsh weather of the highlands and islands of Scotland. Originally, the cattle that grazed the remote highlands were larger and red-haired, while those from the islands off the west coast were smaller and usually black. Today, people regard the highlander as one breed, and its colors vary from red, black, tan, and yellow to almost white.

The highlander's hairy, rather comical forelock plays a vital role. In the winter it keeps out the driving wind, rain, and snow. In the summer it provides protection from flying insects that could cause infection.

Although a group of cattle is often called a herd, the highlanders are referred to as a fold. This term dates back to olden times when at night crofters, or tenant farmers, brought their cattle into open-fronted stone shelters called folds. This was done to protect them from the severe weather and wolves.

Its Remarkable Coats

Unique among cattle, the highlander has a double coat of hair. The shaggy, outer coat is made of long hairs, sometimes reaching 13 inches (33 cm). This well-

Wayne Hutchinson/FLPA





A highland cow with her calf

oiled woolly coat repels the rain and snow. Underneath that, the soft, woolly inner coat keeps the animal warm.

Jim, who has worked with highlanders for many years, explained: "Shampooing them is very difficult, as it is almost impossible to wet them through!" Because of its woolly covering, the highlander thrives and breeds on mountain terrain beset by pounding rain and freezing winds, where no other cattle breed can survive.

If the weather gets too hot and dry in the summer, the adaptable highlander sheds its heavy overcoat. Later, when the cold, damp weather returns, it grows a new one.

A Valuable Asset

While sheep tend to destroy vegetation by munching on roots and delicate shoots, cows—including the highlander—do not. In fact, the highlander improves poor grazing land. How? With its long, powerful horns and broad muzzle, it clears unwanted brush that most other breeds of cattle refuse to touch. This housekeeping makes way for grass and trees to regenerate.

The highlander's two woolly coats offer another big advantage. Needing no extra layer

of fat to keep warm, the highlander's meat is lower in fat and cholesterol and higher in protein and iron than beef from other cattle. And this top-quality meat is produced without the need for expensive feeds!

A Note of Caution

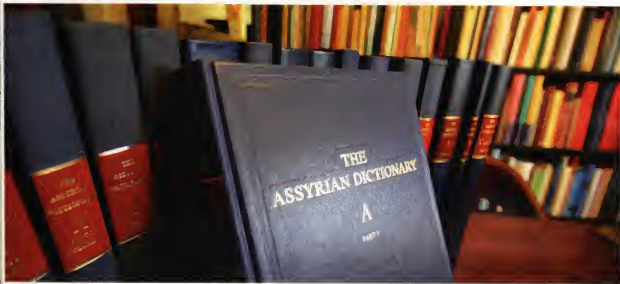
Highlanders have a long history of living close to humans. Early Scots kept them on the ground floor of their homes. The presence of the cattle contributed to the warmth of the upstairs, where the family lived.

Although domesticated cattle are generally calm and docile, at times some highlanders can be dangerous. For example, a mother with a baby calf can be very protective. Also, a person needs to take care to walk around a fold of highlanders and not through it.

The highlander's versatility has made it a popular breed all over the world. It thrives as far north as Alaska and Scandinavia, and it can be found grazing 10,000 feet (3,000 m) up in the Andes Mountains. At the same time, though, it does well in warmer areas.

Scotland is known for tartan, kilts, and bagpipes, but also for its beautiful, unmistakable highland cattle. Do you have cows with two woolly coats where you live?

A Dictionary 90 Years in the Making



IN 1621, an Italian explorer found an unknown form of writing in the ruins of the ancient Persian city of Persepolis. During the 1800's, archaeologists excavating in Iraq unearthed numerous similar inscriptions on clay tablets and palace walls. The texts preserve the Mesopotamian languages spoken by such rulers as Sargon II, Hammurabi, and Nebuchadnezzar II. The script, consisting of wedge-shaped strokes, came to be known as cuneiform.

This type of writing held the key to understanding the great civilizations of ancient Mesopotamia. Scholars working to decipher these documents thus

The 26-part Assyrian Dictionary has more than 9,700 pages!

saw the need for a comprehensive dictionary of Akkadian, of which language Assyrian and Babylonian are closely-related dialects.

This challenging project was undertaken by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, U.S.A., in 1921, and it was completed 90 years later, in 2011. The result is the monumental 26-part *Assyrian Dictionary*, which contains more than 9,700 pages. It cov-

Photo by Ash-har Quraishi. Courtesy of WITV1.1.
under license from WITV Digital Archives

ers languages and dialects used in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, from the third millennium B.C.E. to 100 C.E.

Why is the dictionary so extensive? Why did it take so long to compile? And who would be interested in using it?

What the Dictionary Covers

"The dictionary is not simply a word list," explains Gil Stein, director of Chicago's Oriental Institute. Rather, "by detailing the history and range of uses of each word, this unique volume is in essence a cultural encyclopedia of Mesopotamian history, society, literature, law, and religion. It is an indispensable research tool for any scholar anywhere who seeks to explore the written record of Mesopotamian civilization."

The editors realized early in their work that "in order to do justice to the meaning of a word, all its occurrences must be collected, and that they must be collected not simply as words, but as words with as much accompanying text as would be needed to determine the meaning of the word within one particular context or usage." The dictionary thus became a compendium of quotations from and translations of original cuneiform passages in which the defined words appear.

Literally millions of cuneiform texts have come to light over the last two centuries, and they deal with a huge range of subject matter. Assyro-Babylonian, or Akkadian, was the international language of diplomacy throughout the an-

cient Middle East. Yet, people in the same area produced literature; engaged in trade; studied mathematics, astronomy, and magic; established laws; developed professions; and practiced religion. Hence, their writings on all these and other topics furnish a wealth of information.

The picture these texts paint is not one of an alien civilization. "A lot of what you see is absolutely recognisable—people expressing fear and anger, expressing love, asking for love," says Matthew Stolper, a University of Chicago professor of Assyriology who worked on the project at intervals for 30 years. "There are inscriptions from kings that tell you how great they are," he adds, "and inscriptions from others who tell you those guys weren't so great." And texts from Nuzi, in modern-day Iraq, document 3,500-year-old legal disputes over such questions as a widow's inheritance, an irrigated field, and a borrowed donkey.

The Work Completed?

Assyriologists from all over the world contributed to the project. The institute's staff spent decades filing close to 2,000,000 index cards illustrating word usage. The first volume went to press in 1956. Since then, 25 more installments have appeared as they became ready. The whole set sells for about \$2,000 (U.S.), but all the information has been made available online, free of charge.

A full 90 years were needed to complete the dictionary. Even so, those who worked on this mammoth project recognize its limitations. Says one article on the subject: "They still do not know what some words mean, and because new discoveries are being made all the time, it is . . . a work in progress."

ANSWERS TO PAGES 30 AND 31
1. Lizard in scene 5. 2. Knife in scene 2.
3. 724,700. 4. A.

What is a real man?



*"My father died when I was three years old. Sometimes I feel envious of boys who grew up with a father in their life. They seem to be a lot more confident than I am."—Alex.**

*"My relationship with my father is minimal. I've had to learn on my own what it means to be a real man."
—Jonathan.*

CAN you relate to the statements of the young men quoted above? Do you fear, for one reason or another, that you'll never learn what it means to be a real man? If so, don't despair!

Consider how you can overcome two common challenges.

* Some names in this article have been changed.

CHALLENGE 1: Popular misconceptions about manhood

What some people say:

- Real men are tough; they don't cry.
- Real men don't let anyone tell them what to do.
- Men are better than women.

Another way to look at it: Manhood is the opposite of boyhood—not the opposite of womanhood. You become a real man when you leave behind the traits of a child. The Christian apostle Paul wrote: "When I was a babe, I used to speak as a babe, to think as a babe, to reason as a babe; but *now that I have become a man*, I have done away with the traits of a babe." (1 Corinthians 13:11) In other words, the more you replace childish ways of thinking, speaking, and acting with

mature ways of thinking, speaking, and acting, the more you prove yourself to be a real man.*

Try this: On a sheet of paper, write down your answers to the following questions:

1. In what areas have I already made progress in putting away “the traits of a babe”?
2. In what areas can I improve?

Suggested reading: Luke 7:36-50. See how Jesus proved himself to be a real man by (1) standing up for what was right and (2) treating others—including women—with respect.

“I admire my friend, Ken. He is a strong man—physically, emotionally, and spiritually—but also a kind man. His example has taught me that a real man doesn’t put other people down just to raise himself up.”—Jonathan.

* See the box “Boy Versus Man.”



Ian—Being a man means not only that you carry yourself in a masculine way but also that you’re willing to work hard, control your emotions, and take responsibility for your actions.

CHALLENGE 2: *Lack of a wholesome father figure*

What some people say:

- If your father isn’t in the picture, you’ll never really learn what it means to be a man.
- If your father set a poor example, you’re doomed to repeat his mistakes.

Another way to look at it: Even if you’ve had a less-than-ideal childhood, *you are not doomed to fail!* You can rise above your circumstances. (2 Corinthians 10:4) You can choose to follow King David’s advice to his son Solomon: “Be strong and prove yourself to be a man.”—1 Kings 2:2.

Admittedly, it can be difficult to grow up with an inattentive father—or no father at all. “Not knowing your father is a huge

BOY VERSUS MAN

**A child
can often be . . .**

rude.

self-centered.

focused on having fun.

ruled by his emotions.

**A real man
endeavors to be . . .**

respectful.—Romans 12:10.

self-sacrificing.—1 Corinthians 10:24.

responsible.—Galatians 6:5.

in control of his emotions.—Proverbs 16:32.

disadvantage in life," says Alex, quoted at the outset. "I'm 25, but I feel as if I'm just now learning things that I should have learned in my early teens." If you feel similar to the way Alex does, what can you do about it?

Try this: Find a mentor—someone who sets a good example as a man.* Ask him which qualities he believes are especially important in a real man. Then ask him how you can

* Elders in the Christian congregation can be good mentors.

WHY NOT ASK YOUR PARENTS?

What, do you think, defines a real man? How am I doing when it comes to maturity?

develop those qualities in yourself.—Proverbs 1:5.

Suggested reading: Proverbs chapters 1-9. Notice the fatherly advice that can help a boy to grow into a wise, spiritual man.

"I'm proud of the man I'm becoming. Although I wish my father had been a part of my progress, I'm optimistic about the future. I'm convinced that I am not doomed to fail."—Jonathan.

Find more help for teens at www.jw.org

After the December 2012 issue of *Awake!* "Young People Ask" articles will be found exclusively online at www.jw.org

A NOTE TO PARENTS

FATHERS—To a large extent, your son will base his definition of what it means to be a man on your example. If you treat your wife with respect, you are teaching your son to treat women with respect. If you work hard to provide for your family—even if doing so requires doing mental or tiring work—you are teaching your son to work hard and to be responsible.—1 Timothy 5:8.

Perhaps your relationship with your own father was less than ideal. Maybe your father didn't have a good relationship with his father. But remember: You have a chance to break the cycle. Don't waste that opportunity! Choose to stay close to your son.* Set a good example for him, and he may well grow up to be a real man—a man whom you will be proud to call your son.—Proverbs 23:24.

* For more information, see the article "How Can Fathers Stay Close to Their Sons?" in the November 1, 2011, issue of *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

MOTHERS—How can you help your son grow to be a real man? Avoid making unfavorable comparisons to your husband. Suppose, for example, that your son makes a mistake that reminds you of your husband. You might be tempted to blurt out: "Stop that! You're being just like your father!" Granted, you are right to counsel your son for his mistake. But remember: If your words or actions imply that *everything* your husband does is wrong, you may unwittingly hinder your son's growth into manhood.

Support your husband's involvement in his son's life. Encourage them to spend time together, and look for opportunities to highlight your husband's positive qualities and the good things that he does. Does he work hard to provide for the family? Does he spend time with his children? Does he treat others with respect? Let your son know how much you appreciate those things. Such comments will help your son to learn from the good aspects of his father's example.



Photo: Mikhail Samkharze

THE CAUCASUS

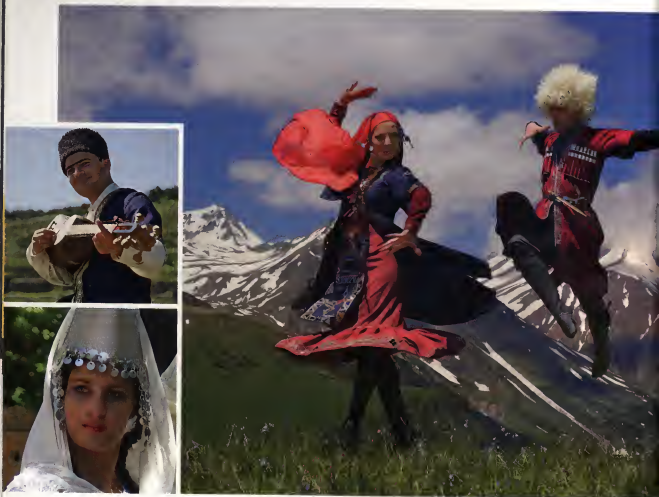
A "MOUNTAIN OF LANGUAGES"

IMAGINE finding yourself in a predominantly mountainous region that is about the size of Spain. To your amazement, you discover dozens of different nations, each with its own language. Why, in some places, people living in neighboring villages cannot understand one another! Medieval geographers must have felt similar amazement, for one described just such a region—the Caucasus—as “a mountain of tongues.”

Straddling the Caucasus Mountains between the Black and Caspian seas, this region's location is at a crossroads of continents and civilizations, which has given it a long history and rich culture. Its people are known for their respect for older ones, their

love of dance, and their warm hospitality. But many visitors find the most fascinating aspect of the Caucasus to be its wide variety of ethnic groups and languages—more languages, in fact, than are spoken in any other European region of its size.





Astounding Diversity

In the fifth century B.C.E., Greek historian Herodotus reported: "Many and all manner of nations dwell in the Caucasus." About the beginning of the first century C.E., another Greek historian, Strabo, wrote of 70 tribes in the region. Each tribe had its own language and came to carry on trade at Dioscurias, now the site of the modern city of Sukhumi, on the Black Sea. Several decades later, Pliny the Elder, a Roman scholar, wrote that the Romans needed 130 interpreters to do business in Dioscurias.

Today more than 50 ethnic groups still call the Caucasus home. Each boasts its own customs and often its own characteristic clothing, art, and architecture. At least 37 indigenous languages are spoken here—some by millions of people while others are spoken only in certain villages. The most linguistically diverse part of this region, Russia's Dagestan Republic, is home to about 30 indigenous ethnic groups. Until now, the exact linguistic relationships among all these languages and their relationship with other language groups remain unclear.



Would you like to see what Caucasian languages look like? Jehovah's Witnesses' official Web site, www.jw.org, publishes in more than 400 languages. Among them are some spoken in the Caucasus, the fascinating region appropriately described as a "mountain of languages."

*Jehovah's Witnesses teaching
the Bible in the Caucasus* ►

A MOSAIC OF LETTERS AND SOUNDS

Caucasian languages use a variety of scripts. Both Armenian and Georgian have their own unique alphabet. Others employ a writing system based on Cyrillic letters or a modified Latin alphabet.

Northwest Caucasian languages have the most consonants of any languages in the world, but few vowels. According to one encyclopedia, those languages use consonants "made at almost every possible point in the mouth and throat." Ubykh, a Caucasian language whose last native speaker died in 1992, is said to have had at least 80 different consonants and perhaps only 2 vowels.

A legend tells of a Turkish sultan who sent a scholar to the Caucasus to learn Ubykh. Upon his return, to explain why he was unable to learn it, the scholar took a small bag of pebbles and poured them out onto the marble floor before the sultan. "Listen to these sounds," the scholar said. "Foreigners can gain no greater understanding of Ubykh speech."



This is the final article in an eight-part series in "Awake!" examining an outstanding feature of the Bible—its prophecies, or predictions. The articles set out to answer these questions: Are Bible prophecies merely the work of clever humans? Do they bear the hallmark of divine inspiration? We invite you to weigh the evidence.

"Let Your Kingdom Come"



FOR some two thousand years, professed Christians have been praying for God's Kingdom to come. The practice is based on Jesus' own words. He taught his disciples to pray: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth."—Matthew 6:10.

What is the Kingdom for which so many people pray? It is God's heavenly government, and it will replace all other governments. As the appointed King of this Kingdom, Jesus Christ carries out God's will in heaven and on earth. (Daniel 2:44; 7:13, 14) In due time, God will answer this model prayer by bringing an end to wickedness

and suffering and providing salvation for an unnumbered "great crowd" of loyal worshippers. (Revelation 7:9, 10, 13-17) Then, "the righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it."—Psalm 37:29.

Is there any way of knowing what specific conditions we can anticipate under Christ's rule? There certainly is! When Jesus was on earth, he demonstrated both his desire to solve mankind's problems and his ability to do so. Let us examine four Bible prophecies and consider how Jesus provided foregleams of what he will do earth wide as King in God's heavenly Kingdom.

Prophecy 1: *"Jehovah . . . is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth. The bow he breaks apart and does cut the spear in pieces; the wagons he burns in the fire."*
—Psalm 46:8, 9.

Fulfillment: Jesus Christ, the "Peaceable Prince," will bring permanent tranquillity to our planet. By means of a peaceful program of education and global disarmament, God's Kingdom will unite all mankind in one true international brotherhood.—Isaiah 2:2-4; 9:6, 7, footnote; 11:9.

What history reveals:

● Jesus taught his followers, not to take up arms, but to live at peace with one another. When one of his disciples tried to come to his defense with weapon in hand, Jesus said to him: "Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword." (Matthew 26:51, 52) Jesus stated that true Christians would be identified by the love they show for one another.—John 13:34, 35.

Prophecy 2: *"There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow."*—Psalm 72:16.

Fulfillment: God's Kingdom will eradicate malnutrition, food shortages, and starvation. Everyone will have an abundance of good food.

What history reveals:

● Jesus' sincere compassion for hungry people was clearly evident, and his miraculous ability to feed large crowds was awe-inspiring. One eyewitness reported: "[Jesus] commanded the crowds to recline on the grass and took the five loaves and two fishes, and, looking up to heaven, he said a blessing and, after breaking the loaves, he distributed them to the disciples, the disciples in turn to the crowds. So all ate and were satisfied, and

they took up the surplus of fragments, twelve baskets full. Yet those eating were about five thousand men, besides women and young children."—Matthew 14:14, 19-21.

Prophecy 3: *"No resident will say: 'I am sick.'" (Isaiah 33:24) "The eyes of the blind ones will be opened, and the very ears of the deaf ones will be unstopped. At that time the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness."*—Isaiah 35:5, 6.

Fulfillment: God's Kingdom will wipe out every kind of disease and infirmity. The blind

NO MORE FREAKISH WEATHER

God's Kingdom will do something no other government could ever do: it will take control of natural forces. Jesus demonstrated that he has power over the wind and the sea, as well as vegetation and living creatures. Therefore, when Christ rules over the earth, mankind will never again be the victims of natural disasters.—Mark 4:36-41; 11:12-14, 20-23; Luke 5:4-11.



UNDER GOD'S KINGDOM:



**All badness
will be
eradicated**

Revelation 21:3, 4

No crime or corruption
No child abuse
No racial prejudice

**The whole
earth will be
a paradise**

Psalms 72:5-9

No nuclear threat
No pollution
No natural disasters

**Mankind will
enjoy ideal living
conditions**

Isaiah 65:21-25

Proper housing
for everyone
Satisfying employment
for all
Perfect health
Peace and happiness
Never-ending life



will see, and the deaf will hear and speak. Never again will anyone need medication, hospitals, or doctors.

What history reveals:

● When Jesus taught people about God's Kingdom, he gladly cured all their diseases and disabilities. Thus, on a small scale, Jesus demonstrated what he will do earth wide as King of God's heavenly Kingdom.—Luke 7:22; 9:11.

Prophecy 4: God "will actually swallow up death forever."—Isaiah 25:8.

Fulfillment: During Christ's rule as King of God's Kingdom, "those in the memorial tombs" will be resurrected to life on a paradise earth. (John 5:28, 29) Jesus will vanquish death, our most relentless enemy, enabling us to enjoy everlasting life.—Psalm 37:29.

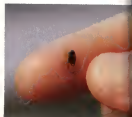
What history reveals:

● On at least three occasions, Jesus dem-

onstrated his power by bringing a dead person back to life. (Luke 7:11-15; 8:41-55; John 11:38-44) After Jesus himself died, some 500 eyewitnesses could testify that he had been raised from the dead.—1 Corinthians 15:3-8.

This eight-part series of articles has discussed numerous Bible prophecies that have come true. All those prophecies, along with many others, show that the Bible is not merely the work of clever humans. Rather, it bears the hallmark of divine inspiration. There can be no doubt that "everything in the Scriptures is God's Word."—2 Timothy 3:16, *Contemporary English Version*.

Because the Bible is a book of unerring prophecy, you have every reason to believe that "just a little while longer, and the wicked one will be no more; and you will certainly give attention to his place, and he will not be. But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace." —Psalm 37:10, 11.



An adult bedbug measures only about one fifth of an inch (0.5 cm) in length

"Don't Let the Bedbugs Bite!"

BY THE middle of the 20th century, humans seemed to be winning the war on bedbugs. Some people were familiar with bedbugs only because of an old nursery rhyme that instructed: "Don't let the bedbugs bite." In the 1970's, however, many countries decided to restrict the use of DDT—a primary weapon against bedbugs—because it was toxic and ecologically harmful.

Increasingly, bedbugs became resistant to other chemical treatments. People also began to travel more frequently and unwittingly took bedbugs with them. With what result? "During the past 12 years," says a 2012 report on bedbug control, "a resurgence of bed bugs has been reported in the U.S., Canada, the Middle East, several European countries, Australia and parts of Africa."

In Moscow, Russia, complaints about bedbugs grew tenfold in one recent year. Meanwhile, on the other side of the globe, in Australia, bedbug infestations have increased by some 5,000 percent since 1999!

Some people inadvertently carry bedbugs from stores, theaters, or hotels. "You're going to get bedbugs," says one U.S. hotel manager. "Dealing with them is the cost of doing business these days." Why are bedbugs so difficult to eradicate? How can you protect yourself?

If bedbugs do invade your home, what practical steps can you take to eliminate them and prevent them from returning?

Tiny Survivors

Because they are no bigger than an apple seed and have a flat body, bedbugs can hide almost anywhere. They may find a home in your mattress, your furniture, an electrical outlet, or even your telephone. Bedbugs tend to stay within 10 to 20 feet (3 to 6 m) of beds and seating areas. Why? To keep close to their food source—you.*

Bedbugs often bite while their victims are asleep. However, most people never feel the bite because the bugs inject an anesthetic that allows them to feed for up to ten minutes without interruption. And although bedbugs may feed every week, they have been known to survive without a meal for many months.

Granted, unlike mosquitoes and some other insects, bedbugs are not known to spread infectious disease. Nevertheless, their bites can become itchy and develop into welts, and many people suffer emotionally. Bedbug victims may endure insomnia, shame, and even "phantom bites" long after the bugs are

* Entomologists report that bedbugs feed on the blood of humans and other mammals, including household pets.

gone. A report from Sierra Leone calls bedbugs "a source of great irritation and sleepless nights" and warns of "the social stigma attached to bedbugs."

Keep Bedbugs Out

Bedbugs can afflict anyone. They are easier to manage if you detect them early. So learn to recognize the signs of bedbugs at home and when you travel. Inspect your furniture, baseboards, and luggage for small eggs the size of poppy seeds and for blood stains. Use a flashlight to improve your chances of spotting them.

Give bedbugs fewer places to hide. Seal cracks and crevices in walls and door frames. Although uncleanness does not cause bedbugs, they will be easier to spot and control if you vacuum regularly and reduce clutter. In a hotel room, you may reduce the chance of having bedbugs travel with you if you keep your suitcase off the floor and the bed.

If Bedbugs Invade Your Home

If you find bedbugs in your home or hotel room, you may be anxious and even ashamed. While on vacation, Dave and his wife were bitten by bedbugs. "We were mortified," says Dave. "What would we tell our friends and family when we got home? Would they think that any itchiness or skin irritation they had was from their visit to our house?" Even though these reactions are normal, do not let embarrassment hold you back from seeking help. The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene gives this reassurance: "It is hard, but not impossible to get rid of bed bugs."

Do not, however, underestimate the challenge of exterminating bedbugs. If you find bedbugs in your home, a licensed pest controller can likely give you the help you need. Although the chemicals mentioned earlier are no longer used, pest controllers now combine several other effective methods to treat the bugs. Entomologist Dini M. Miller also

notes: "Bed bug management requires just as much cooperation from the occupants as from the [building] management and pest control company." By following the technician's instructions and taking reasonable precautions, you can do your part and not "let the bedbugs bite"!

Inspect for bedbugs, and take steps to prevent them from hiding in your home



 **Inspect your luggage**



 **Seal crevices and cracks**



 **Vacuum regularly**

A Great Green Wall Across Africa

A Pan-African project, launched by the African Union in 2007, aims to halt the desert's advance with a green wall. From Senegal in the West to Djibouti in the East, 11 countries are planting millions of seedlings of appropriate species, in an effort to create a swath of vegetation 4,750 miles (7,600 km) long and 9 miles (15 km) wide. "We have to plant species which offer no incentive for logging," says Aliou Guissé, professor of plant ecology at Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal. It is hoped that the reforested areas will also serve as a nature reserve and provide sustainable resources for local communities.

Why Do We Yawn?

Scientists cannot explain why every person on the planet yawns—in most cases, several times a day. Even babies in the womb do it. So do hedgehogs, ostriches, snakes, and fish. There are lots of theories, often contradictory, but none satisfy all the researchers. Many scientists have proposed that an explanation for this gulp of air, lasting six seconds on average, is to augment the brain's oxygen supply. Yet "so far, researchers haven't found evidence supporting this suspicion," says *Science News*. New studies on rats seem to suggest that "a yawn may be a thermostat, cooling an overheated brain." But no one really knows.

"The proportion of **Google searches that include the word 'porn'** has tripled since 2004."—*THE ECONOMIST*, BRITAIN.

"When a young [Russian] woman gets married, . . . the likelihood that **her husband is going to strike her**, or that their fights will get physical, is around 60 percent."—*MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI*, RUSSIA.

"One in seven UK based scientists or doctors has witnessed colleagues **intentionally altering or fabricating data** during their research or for the purposes of publication."—*BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL*, BRITAIN.

"The number of **cancer survivors in the U.S. has quadrupled** since 1971 to about 12 million . . . The increase in survivors can be attributed in large part to earlier diagnosis through screening, more effective treatment and improved follow-up care."—*UC BERKELEY WELLNESS LETTER*, U.S.A.

Just before the 2011 Christmas celebrations, **fighting broke out among some 100 priests and monks of rival denominations in the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem**. "It was a trivial problem that . . . occurs every year," said a police lieutenant-colonel. "No one was arrested because all those involved were men of God."—*REUTERS NEWS SERVICE*, U.S.A.





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WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM ... Abraham?

DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO SHOW
KINDNESS TO OTHERS?

- Color the pictures. • Read the Bible verses, and summarize them as you fill in the missing dialogue.
- Find the hidden items: (1) a lizard and (2) a knife.
- "FOR FAMILY REVIEW" answers on page 15

ABRAHAM MET THREE
VISITORS.—GENESIS 18:2

HE INVITED THEM TO HAVE THEIR
FEET WASHED, TO RECLINE, AND
TO EAT A PIECE OF
—GENESIS 18:4, 5

ABRAHAM TOLD SARAH:
"MAKE ROUND"
—GENESIS 18:6

GENESIS 18:7

GENESIS 18:8

What kind things did Abraham do to make others feel welcome? CLUE: Genesis 18:2, 4-5. What can you do to show kindness to others? CLUE: Romans 12:13. What do you learn from this account in Genesis?

What do you think? To whom should we especially try to show kindness? CLUE: Galatians 6:10.

Collect and Learn

SAMSON

BIBLE CARD

24



QUESTIONS

- A. His father's name was _____
- B. What great feat of strength did Samson perform involving the city of Gaza?
- C. Who betrayed Samson?

About 980 B.C.E.

1 C.E.

Last Bible book written

Lived before 1120 B.C.E.

4026 B.C.E.

Adam created

Cut out, fold in half, and save



SAMSON

PROFILE An outstanding Judge who defended Israel for 20 years. (Judges 15:20) Jehovah used Samson to “take the lead in saving Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.” (Judges 13:5) God’s spirit gave him great strength. Most important, Samson had strong faith in Jehovah.—Hebrews 11:32-34.

ANSWERS

- A. Manoah.—Judges 13:8, 24.
- B. He carried the city gate, its side posts, and the bar to the top of the mountain in front of Hebron.—Judges 16:2, 3.
- C. Delilah.—Judges 16:4, 5.

Peoples and Lands

3. Our names are Lesly, aged 10, Cathleen, aged 8, and Alondra, aged 7. We live in Mexico. About how many of Jehovah’s Witnesses live in Mexico? Is it 295,400, 455,000, or 724,700?
4. Which dot shows where we live? Circle it, draw a dot where you live, and see how close you are to Mexico.



Children’s Picture Search

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.



Awake!

JANUARY 2013

Raising
Considerate Children
in a Me-First World

Do Not Miss the Next Issue of *Awake!*

Beginning with the January 2013 issue, *Awake!* will include easy-to-read text layouts, enhanced art design, and the following new features: **"Help for the Family," "Interview," "Lands and Peoples,"** and **"Portraits From the Past."**

* Some features will not appear in every issue.

In the January 2013 issue of *Awake!*

Help for the Family—"How to Communicate With Your Teenager"

Interview—"A Biochemist Explains Her Faith"

Lands and Peoples—"A Visit to Cameroon"